

**Glossary of Diversity-Related Terms**  
**Created by the Diversity Office**  
**For LANL Employees**

***Affirmative Action (AA)***

Definition used by the Office of Equal Opportunity at LANL:

First established by the Federal government in 1965 through the executive order signed by Lyndon Johnson, affirmative action was developed as a means to reach the ultimate goal of equal employment opportunity. It consists of special actions in recruitment, hiring, and other areas which are designed to eliminate the present effects of past discrimination, such as the under representation of minorities, women and the employment of veterans and persons with disabilities. The purpose of affirmative action is to achieve equal employment opportunity. In summary, affirmative action:

- is legally mandated,
- consists of special efforts in recruiting and retaining minorities, women, veterans, and individuals with disabilities,
- intended to eliminate present effects of past discrimination.

Definition used by UC Berkeley:

Affirmative Action - To assure equal employment opportunity for minorities and women, for persons with disabilities, and for special disabled veterans, Vietnam era veterans, and any other veterans who served on active duty during a war or in a campaign or expedition for which a campaign badge has been authorized.

***cultural relativism***

Definition by Herbst (1997):

The viewing of other cultures as objectively as possible without the use of the beliefs and values of one's own culture to judge the other. A tenet of modern cultural anthropology and other social sciences, this view contrasts with ethnocentrism. As an approach, cultural relativism, as it is understood in anthropology, may entail describing the beliefs and customs of another culture from the point of view of those who are participants in it. Cultural anthropology also emphasizes that to understand the beliefs of a particular culture, one must see them in their cultural context.

***culture***

Definition by Granrose (1997):

The term *culture* refers to a particular group's shared system of socially transmitted behavior patterns, beliefs, and the shared artifacts needed for the group to use the resources of the environment and to survive.

***discrimination***

Definition by Jackson et al. (1998):

The term *discrimination* denotes intentional acts that draw unfair or injurious distinctions, that are based solely on ethnic or racial bases, and that have effects favorable to in-groups and negative to out-groups. Normally, discrimination is the set of observable behaviors that might ensue from ethnocentrism, prejudice, or racism.

## ***diversity***

Definition by Lisa Gutierrez (LANL Diversity Office Director):

Diversity is everyone. It is all the dimensions of how we identify and connect with each other either in visible (race, gender, ethnic, etc.) or less visible (job level, sexual orientation, religion, etc.) ways.

Definition by Norman Johnson (LANL Theoretical Division):

The unique contributions of an individual to the group.

## ***Equal Employment Opportunity***

Definition used by the Office of Equal Opportunity at LANL:

A system of employment practices within an organization under which individuals are not excluded from any participation, advancement of benefits because of their race, color, national origin, religion, sex, physical or mental disability, medical condition (cancer-related), ancestry, marital status, age, sexual orientation, citizenship, or status as a Vietnam-era veteran or special disabled veteran. This applies to all employment practices, including recruitment, selection, promotion, transfer, merit increase, salary, training and development, demotion, and separation. In summary, equal employment opportunity

- is legally mandated,
- focuses on eliminating discriminatory employment and human resource policies and practices,
- is intended to provide equal access and opportunity—no one is excluded from participation.

## ***Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)***

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) was established by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and began operating on July 2, 1965. The EEOC enforces the principal federal statutes prohibiting employment discrimination, including:

- Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, which prohibits employment discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin;
- the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, as amended (ADEA), which prohibits employment discrimination against individuals 40 years of age and older;
- the Equal Pay Act of 1963 (EPA), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender in compensation for substantially similar work under similar conditions;
- the Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), which prohibits employment discrimination on the basis of disability in both the public and private sector,
- excluding the federal government;
- the Civil Rights Act of 1991, which includes provisions for monetary damages in cases of intentional discrimination and clarifies provisions regarding disparate impact actions; and,
- Section 501 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, which prohibits employment discrimination against federal employees with disabilities.

## ***ethnic group***

Definition by Herbst (1997):

Any category of people within a larger society who possess distinctive social or cultural traits, shared history, and sense of their commonness, regardless of the group's size, power, race (the perception of certain common biological traits), or time of immigration.

### ***ethnocentrism***

Definition by Herbst (1997):

The tendency of people to put their own group (*ethnos*) at the center: to see things through the narrow lens of their own culture and use the standards of that culture to judge others...An ethnocentric point of view usually leads to a biased belief in the inferiority of other groups and, at the extreme, to cultural chauvinism. The differences we encounter in others—in dress, speech, manners, politics, or any other cultural attribute—test our sense of trust in them and might even threaten or offend us.

### ***Foreign national***

Definition from the Foreign Visits and Assignments program described on the LANL Internal Security (ISEC) Web Site:

...any person who is not a US citizen or is a stateless person. An immigrant alien (commonly referred to as Permanent Residents or Resident Aliens) is considered a foreign national for the purposes of this program.

### ***institutional racism***

Definition by Jackson et al. (1998):

...refers to the system of laws; policies; and political, economic, and institutional arrangements that perpetuate and maintain subordinate and dominant group positions in society.

### ***prejudice***

Definition by Jackson et al. (1998):

*Prejudice* is generally considered as an attitude or set of attitudes held toward a group, encompassing a set of negative feelings (affect), beliefs (stereotypes), and intentions (behavioral dispositions) to act unfavorably toward groups or members of groups. These attitudes are considered to have been formed as part of person's early social development and normally are thought to arise from direct parental socialization as well as indirect social learning from other family members, peers, and increasingly, the mass media.

### ***race***

Definition by Herbst (1997):

In its biological sense, a category of people distinguished by such inherited physical characteristics as skin color, certain facial features, and quality or form of hair. *Race* may also signify the prejudices, beliefs, and policies called racial or racist. Behind the term is an extremely vague, misleading, and intractable folk concept about how people are to be categorized.

...*Race* most accurately refers to a category of people *perceived by society* as being biologically different from others. But despite the perception, it tends to be social status or economic interest, not physical differences, that defines these people.

### ***racial profiling***

Definition by DOE from the DOE final report published in January 2000 entitled, "Task Force Against Racial Profiling":

'Racial profiling is generally defined as wrongful and hurtful judgments about an individual or group of individuals based solely on their ethnicity or color of their skins.

Definition used by EMBRY-RIDDLE Aeronautical University (ERAU Communications):

Racial profiling is the identification of racial factors, such as skin color, hair texture, facial structure, physical attire, spoken language, accent, surname, and travel history, which experts and statistics have associated with a specific behavior, such as an act of aviation terrorism.

### ***racism***

Definition by Herbst (1997):

A system of beliefs, held consciously or otherwise, alleging the inferiority of members of one supposedly biologically different group to those of one's own group. Racism focuses on perceived innate or "natural" differences between groups. It is grounded in the assumption that the differences are associated with (or even determine) behavior, culture, intellect, or social achievement.

### ***Sensitive country***

Definition from the Foreign Visits and Assignments program described on the LANL Internal Security (ISEC) Web Site:

...a country to which particular consideration is given for policy reasons during the DOE and laboratory internal review and approval process. According to DOE, an individual is to be considered sensitive if they are a citizen of a sensitive country, employed in a sensitive country or born in a sensitive country, unless the person is now a US citizen. Countries may appear on this list for reasons of national security, nuclear nonproliferation, regional instability, or terrorism support. The DOE sensitive countries list does not necessarily reflect the policies or views of any other agency of the US government.

### ***stereotype***

Definition by Herbst (1997):

A generalization about what people are like; an exaggerated image of their characteristics, without regard to individual attributes.

Many stereotypes are merely cultural expectations about our world, shorthand ways of dealing with its complex reality. But prejudiced people in particular think in terms of these images, and do so in ways that are potentially abusive. The stereotype in effect says that to know one member of the group is to know them all.

### ***xenophobia***

Definition by Herbst (1997):

From the Greek word meaning "fear of strangers," the fear or hatred of anything that is foreign or outside of one's own group, nation, or culture. Xenophobia is an overt form of prejudice and ethnocentrism that may contribute to feelings of nationalism. It confirms the view of some of those who would exclude others, restrict immigration, or—in those cases when abstaining from engaging in international relations is done out of loathing or devaluation of outsiders...Xenophobes are likely to tell themselves that it is not that they are hostile toward foreigners, but rather that they are patriotic, nationalistic, or afraid of losing their ethnic values.

## References

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